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Sullivan selected as next superintendent

MELINA BOURDEAU
Staff writer

GRANBY – The Granby School Committee unanimously approved Stephen Sullivan as the next superintendent, following contract negotiations.

In a week-long series of events including site visits at the applicants' respective schools, community Q and As and finally an interview by the School Committee, the group made its decision on

Thursday night.

Finalists Dr. Elizabeth Bienia and Sullivan were interviewed the committee during its special meeting last week.

In their discussion, school committee members discussed the past week.

School Committee Chair Jennifer Bartosz said there were two "really great candidates and I think it warrants a little bit of discussion."

Bartosz went to both site visits

and gave an overview of her take-aways.

"(Vice Chair Stephanie Parent) and I did the site visit for Sullivan and (Jennifer Mallette and I) did the site visit with Dr. Bienia. Both visits were very informative in different ways," said Bartosz. "Obviously, when we're talking to the host site for Sullivan, there's a greater knowledge of the candidate was presented to us. I don't know if that came across because he is the internal candidate, but

the groups of people selected were, for lack of a better word or phrase, stronger."

She said they had conversations for 45 minutes to discuss her with her students, who were elementary school students at Glickman Elementary School in Springfield. She was previously the assistant principal at Gateway High School.



Stephen Sullivan, current principal of Granby Jr/Sr High School, is set to serve as the school's next superintendent following contract negotiations.

See **SULLIVAN**, page 7 •

Park St. tank project slated to begin

Residents asked to be conscious of water consumption

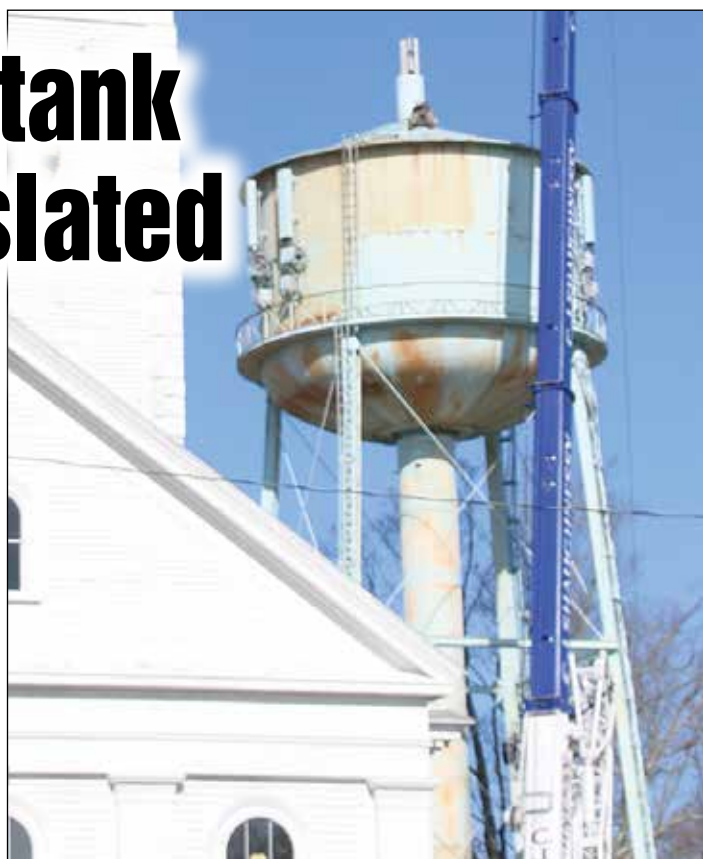
MELINA BOURDEAU
AND WYATT ALOISIO
Staff writer

BELCHERTOWN – Beginning in mid-May, the Park St water tower project will begin, slated to be completed in the summer of 2022.

On Wednesday, April 7, the Belchertown Water District held a pre-construction meeting to kick off the park street elevated storage replacement project. Construction is set to begin in the coming weeks as the tank is disconnected and removed.

Water Superintendent Kevin Williams said the first steps of the project are that the water storage tank will be out of service and demolished to clear space on the parcel behind the Belchertown United Church of Christ at 18 Park St.

Just in time for Earth Day,



ARCHIVE PHOTO

The project on the Park St. water tower is slated to begin in early May.

Williams said as the tank goes off service, he encourages residents to be mindful of their water consumption.

The current tanks, one on Park St and the other on Allen St, work by maintaining a water level in the tank based on pressure. Water is stored in the tanks for use and refills at night, allowing the water district's groundwater wells to recharge. It takes four to five hours to

refill the tanks.

"When we have one tank, there will be less storage and that will have an effect on the amount of water drawn from the wells," Williams said. These draws of water from the wells are referred to as cycles.

"We don't want to have irregular cycles that don't allow the

See **PARK ST.**, page 8 •

SELECTBOARD

Communications committee members appointed by SB

MELINA BOURDEAU
Staff writer

BELCHERTOWN – Three volunteers have been appointed to the Communications Committee, which was officially established by the Selectboard at its April 6 meeting.

The Selectboard unanimously approved appointing Belchertown Community Television manager Lewis Louraine, Belchertown Cultural Council member Gretchen Duhaime and Brian Maroney to the committee.

Selectboard member and liaison to the committee, Jennifer Turner opened the discussion.

"The first phase of the committee... is an audit on the town website as it currently is now," Turner said. "(They are going to) reorganize it to make it flow a little better and update the content."

Turner said the volunteers have agreed to the scope and the timeline of the project.

"It will take a long time, but this will be the first step. As we've talked about a number of

times, we've all agreed the town website is the primary source of information flowing from the community to the town," Turner said. "We have to get this under

"We've all agreed the town website is the primary source of information flowing from the community to the town."

JENNIFER TURNER

control and reorganized first before we can move on to other things I know people are looking to do, like social media policies."

Selectboard member Nick O'Connor asked about the time and labor the project will entail.

"The volunteers are going to create their own project timeline for this. They'll have to interface with staff members... in terms of what their requirements in terms of the website. Whether they want to deep dive more or if staff want to deep dive more, it's going to

See **COMMITTEE**, page 8 •

RECREATION

Rec. Dept updates Selectboard on pool, b-ball courts

MELINA BOURDEAU
Staff writer

BELCHERTOWN – The Selectboard unanimously approved opening the basketball courts, following installation of signage and compliance with COVID-19 guidelines in its meeting last week.

While Belchertown Recreation Department Director Kyle

Thibeault was present in the meeting, he provided the board with an update on the Chestnut Hill pool repairs which began in February.

Basketball courts

Selectboard member Ed Boscher began the discussion on reopening the basketball courts.

"Last week, the Board of Health decided to move us to

phase three step two...I have a number of questions about the basketball courts in particular. Because the skatepark is open, Jessica's playground is open, a lot of the outdoor amenities are open now," Boscher said. "I was wondering if the board would be open to opening the basketball courts."

He clarified that he was referring to the existing basketball courts, as the new basketball court

will not be completed until this summer.

Selectboard Chair Gail Gramarossa and member Jim Barry asked about signage and COVID-19 guidance enforcement.

"Are there precautions recommended? What are the guidelines, if any, and is there some way to remind users?" Gramarossa asked.

Selectboard member and Board of Health liaison Nick O'Connor

said he would ask the Board of Health, but believed there was guidelines for organized games, rather than pick up games.

Thibeault said the Recreation Department would monitor the courts to make sure people are following guidelines.

"The original concern was with the pick-up basketball was that

See **UPDATE**, page 8 •



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COMMUNITY

Town working on stormwater compliance

BELCHERTOWN – The town is currently making efforts to comply with the EPA issued stormwater discharge permit in accordance with the MS4 program.

Earlier this month, a contractor started the annual spring sweeping, Able Industrial sweeping Inc. Department of Public Works Director Steve Williams reported the sweeping will be completed in 3 to 4 weeks “which is well ahead of our normal routine that sometimes takes us through the end of June.”

This service will cost \$37,500 and is the first of two required sweepings per year.

“In addition, we are currently scheduling our annual catch basin cleaning which we hope to start in May,” Williams said.

Finally, the stormwater coordinator has forwarded 11 stormwater permit requests for review already this calendar year.



Annual street sweeping is ongoing in town as part of the efforts to comply with the EPA issued stormwater discharge permit.

COURTESY PHOTO

Election letters, candidate Q and A welcome

BELCHERTOWN/GRANBY– Election season is in full swing and the Sentinel seeks to inform voters about the candidates running this year.

Letters of support

The Sentinel welcomes readers to participate in this year’s town election campaigns by writing let-

ters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 350 words from local residents endorsing specific candidates or discussing local campaign issues should be emailed to Sentinel@turley.com. Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon on Monday to be considered for that Thursday’s newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last two weeks before the election. The last issue letters will run will be the May 6 issue of the paper.

Candidate Q and As

Candidates in the upcoming elec-

tion are invited to send answers to the following questions to run as a candidate Q and A. These are due by Monday, April 26 by 12 p.m. The word limit is 600 for the Q and A, excluding the questions. Please include a two-sentence introduction.

The questions are:

• Why are you running for this position? If you are seeking reelection what qualifies you to continue in this role?

• What is the biggest challenge the board/committee is facing? How will you address it?

• Discuss your commitment to transparency and openness in Belchertown/Granby municipal government. Do you have suggestions for improving either?

• Do you feel the town is doing enough to foster racial/social equity? How would you do so, if elected?

• (For School Committee candidates only) What are the school’s

capital needs? What should the School Committee be doing in the next three years to address them?

• (For Selectboard candidates only) With budget season coming in Belchertown/Granby, how do you intend to tackle areas that may be struggling with potential deficits?

Candidates are encouraged to include a photograph with their statements. Both the text and photograph must be emailed to Sentinel@turley.com.

Priority of the Q and As will be given to candidates in contested races. In the interest of fairness to all candidates, press releases about fundraisers or campaign events will not be printed.

Candidates who wish to further publicize their candidacy, beliefs, events and fundraising may contact Maureen McGarrett at mmcgarrett@turley.com about paid advertising in the Belchertown Sentinel.

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COMMUNITY

Granby Selectboard discusses voting poll hours, tree dedication, and more

KIMBERLY PALMUCCI
Correspondent

GRANBY – During a recent meeting, the Granby Selectboard discussed several items ranging from polling hours for the upcoming town election to a tree planting request and more.

Voting in annual town election

As far as the upcoming annual town election on May 17, early-voting will be by mail only. Board members discussed correspondence from the Town Clerk that requested funds in the amount of \$1,125 to send a postcard mailing to all households with information about early voting, but ultimately, the discussion revealed that several Board members felt three robocalls were the better option instead of a postcard mailing.

“I like the idea of three robocalls, I don’t know if we need to spend the money for the postcards,” one Board member stated during the meeting.

Residents must sign up to receive the robocalls; information on how to do this can be found on the town’s website, granby-ma.gov.

According to a recent town press statement, if residents have not registered to vote yet, Tuesday, April 27, is the last day to register to vote to be eligible to participate

in the Annual Town Election on May 17. Residents may register online at granby-ma.gov or sec.state.ma.us and can also make an appointment with the Town Clerk.

“Early Voting by Mail” applications can be downloaded on the town’s website, with a last day to file for a Mail in Ballot being Tuesday, May 11.

The Town Clerk’s correspondence which was discussed at the meeting also requested the possible polling hours to be 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on the day of the election. Board members said that they would be in favor of these hours, although it appeared that no official decision was made during the meeting. Town Administrator Christopher Martin said he would be in contact with the Town Clerk’s office.

Federal stimulus funds

In other news, the board also discussed a section of Governor Charlie Baker’s initial state budget that would grant federal stimulus funds that could be used to offset the minimal local contribution to Pathfinder—but the town must request the offset in order to use it, if approved.

The offset would only become available to Granby if it goes through the House and Senate and gets approved and included when the final state budget is adopted. But board members described the decision as

a “no brainer” and made a motion to use the funding allocation to reduce a minimal local contribution to Pathfinder, which would result in a savings of more than \$16,000.

“Hopefully it goes through and will save the town a little bit of money,” said Selectboard Chair Glen Sexton.

Tree planting in honor of local nurses

The Board also discussed correspondence from a Registered Nurse with New Jersey-based Hackensack Meridian Health stating that approximately 125 nurses have been trained by two members of the Birch Tree Center for Healthcare Transformation in Granby. To thank these individuals, the correspondence requested the board allow a tree to be planted in Granby “to honor them and thank them.”

Board members discussed the request, which was described as “worthwhile,” and how the town has plenty of space in which a tree could be planted.

Sexton also added that it would be beneficial, in addition to a tree being planted, to include a dedication or plaque citing the reason the tree was dedicated. Martin said he would contact the individual who made the request and “try to get arrangements” to get the tree planted and a dedication ceremony scheduled.

Fatal motorcycle crash on Amherst Rd.

BELCHERTOWN – Belchertown Police are investigating a fatal accident involving a 37 year old man after a motorcycle crash on Amherst Rd.

Belchertown Police and fire responded to a report of a serious motorcycle crash in the area of 102 Amherst Rd. in Belchertown at 8:22 p.m. on Wednesday, April 14.

Responded emergency personnel found the man Jason Zolendziewski, of Belchertown, failed to negotiate a curve in the road and subsequently struck a guardrail.

He was pronounced dead at the scene.

Police say the deceased was operating one of three motorcycles traveling east-bound on Amherst Road shortly after 8 p.m. Wednesday, April 14, when he lost control of the motorcycle and crashed into a guardrail.

Belchertown Police, Massachusetts State Police assigned to the Northwestern District Attorney’s office and the MSP Collision Analysis and Reconstruction Section are investigating.

The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner will determine the cause of death.

Spaghetti Supper at Hope Church

BELCHERTOWN – Hope United Methodist Church’s Mission Team will be holding a pick-up spaghetti supper on Saturday, May 15 with pick up between 4 and 6 p.m. The delicious dinner will consist of spaghetti, meatballs, salad, a roll and dessert and will cost \$10 for adults and \$5 for children.

Please reserve your tickets by May 10 by calling the church office at 323-7584 or emailing Lois at kickthetick@yahoo.com. Tickets can be picked up and paid for at the church office on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, or Thursdays between 8:30 a.m. and 12 p.m. Alternative arrangements can be made when you order your tickets if this isn’t possible. The church is located on the Belchertown common at 31 Main Street.

The spaghetti supper is an annual tradition at Hope with the proceeds being used to support their sister church in Nicaragua.

Girl Scouts offer free ‘Intro to Outdoor Skills’ event

BELCHERTOWN – Girl Scouts of Central & Western Massachusetts invites girls and their guardian to an Intro to Outdoor Skills event for girls in Pre-K and Kindergarten who are not yet Girl Scout members. The event will occur on Monday, May 3, 6 to 7 p.m., on the Belchertown Commons.

Girls will earn their first Girl Scout patch while learning basic hiking and trail safety skills. Sign up is at <http://bit.ly/GSoutdoor>.

Space is limited. All COVID safety precautions will be followed. This is an outdoor event, dress accordingly.

RSVP and register at: <http://bit.ly/GSoutdoor>

For more information contact GSCWM Recruitment Manager Tammy Gilpatrick at tgilpatrick@gscwm.org or 508-749-3639.

Military tribute banners to hang this summer

BELCHERTOWN – The Belchertown Police Department announced the Military Tribute Banner program for 2021 is officially a go.

The display period will be from Memorial Day through Veteran’s Day. This program honors both military veterans and current active duty members of the military. The full color, double sided patriotic banners are 24” by 48” and will feature the names and pictures of the honorees. These banners will be displayed throughout the center of town. After being displayed for the six month period, the banners will be provided to the sponsoring families as keepsakes.

For a cost of new \$175 sponsors will be able to upload pictures and names of individuals who have or who are currently serving in the military. The fee covers both the cost of the banners as well helping in part to

support local veteran’s services.

Drop off renewals will be \$50 and should be sent with a check and used banner by April 30.

Please follow the link below to get to the on-line form for submitting your Military Tribute Banner Sponsorship Order. Sponsorship payment may be made by check payable to: Town of Belchertown. Write “Banner Program” in the memo line. MAIL/DROP OFF: Belchertown PD - 70 State Street Belchertown, MA 01007

Go to <https://militarytributebanners.org/current-programs/massachusetts/belchertown-ma.html>

For more information about the program, please contact Lieutenant Kevin Pacunas or Detective Robert Mann at 413-323-6685 or email: kevpacunas@belchertown.org or rmann@belchertown.org.

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NOTICE:

The Belchertown Water District will be conducting the annual hydrant flushing program April 26th to May 7th 2021 from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm. Flushing will begin in the northern end of the District and proceed south. Rusty colored water and low pressure may occur during this program.



Firefighter / Paramedic

The Town of Belchertown is accepting applications for a full-time Firefighter/Paramedic to respond to fire alarms and to assist in combating and extinguishing fires, and/or to perform Advanced Life Support in addition to other emergency medical assistance as required. The annual starting pay is \$60,496.80 based on an average 42 hour week working 24-hours on, 24-hours off, 24-hours on and 5-days off. Successful candidates must reside within 12 air miles from the Belchertown Fire Department, 10 North Main Street, Belchertown, MA 01007, or not exceed a travel time of 30 minutes to the same per an online direction website. Members will have a time period of 6 months after the completion of their probationary period to meet the requirement, all established by a collective bargaining agreement.

Applicants must possess a valid Massachusetts driver’s license, EMT Paramedic certifications, Firefighter I and II certifications or have the ability to complete the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Recruit Training Program upon hire, CPR certification. Must not use tobacco products.

Successful candidates shall be financially responsible to provide verification leading up to current documentation in passage of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts firefighter physical abilities test (PAT) prior to work start.

A job description for this position and an employment application are available by calling the Select Board’s Office (413-323-0403) during regular business hours. The deadline to apply is 4:00 p.m. on Friday, May 7, 2021.

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Fair booth food for a cause



Tom Curto, Thomas Curto, and Larry Belbin represented the Belchertown Knights of Columbus last weekend for the groups third fundraiser. The fundraiser sold sausage

grinders and went toward the council and the charitable works the Knights of Columbus performs in the community. Find more information by checking out the

Knights Facebook event at www.facebook.com/belchertownkocf or their website page at <https://www.sfrancisbelchertown.com/knights-of-columbus>.

Belchertown Selectboard announces vacancies

BELCHERTOWN – The Belchertown Selectboard is looking for citizens interested in sharing their expertise by serving on a town board/committee. If you have time and are interested in getting involved in your town's activities, please submit a letter of interest to: Selectboard, The Finnerty House, One South Main Street, P.O. Box 670, Belchertown, MA 01007 or by email to selectmen@belchertown.org (unless otherwise indicated below). The town wishes to fill

the following vacancies:

Historic District By-Law Commission: The town wishes to fill an associate member seat (non-voting) and an at-large (full member) seat on the Historic District By-Law Commission. The Commission has regulatory control over new construction, reconstruction, alterations, movements and demolition of all exterior architectural features of buildings and structures within the Historic District which

are visible from any public street, public way or public park. The deadline has been extended to 12 p.m. on Friday, May 28.

Zoning Board of Appeals – Associate Member: The ZBA is responsible for hearing and deciding on applications for special permits, variances and appeals from decisions of the Zoning Enforcement Officer/Building Inspector. The deadline has been extended to 12 p.m. on May 28, 2021.

Open air burning season runs through May 1

BELCHERTOWN – Open Air Burning Season for domestic tree trimming begins Jan. 15, 2021 and runs through May 1, 2021.

A permit/registration number is required. Please complete the bottom portion of a burn permit registration form located on our website: www.belchertown.org/fire. Please click on the word "Application" found on the

website to bring up the registration form. Fill in the bottom portion of the form. Print the Form. And either bring this completed form to the Fire Dept. at 10 North Main St. and place in white metal mailbox on front door with \$ 10 fee attached (exact amount in cash or check payable to "Town of Belchertown") or mail the completed form to: Belchertown Fire Dept. PO

Box 1074, Belchertown, MA 01007. Once this form is received, the department will email your registration number along with all necessary information on activating your permit on any day you wish you burn. Please be sure and include a mandatory email address on your form.

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Two-sport Varsity Captain

Emily '24
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BCTV to host candidates' night

BELCHERTOWN – BCTV will host a 2021 Candidates' Night Live on local television, Friday, April 23, at 7 p.m. This will be a virtual broadcast using the GoToMeeting app.

BCTV will select the moderator for this event. The moderator will be in control at all times and will decide any issues or disputes, or failures to act in compliance with the ground rules.

Each candidate will be given three minutes to read or extemporaneously present a statement representing their views and motivation for running for a specific office.

For contested positions, the three-minute presentation will be followed by a 15-minute group question-and-answer period or no more than five questions in any one question-and-answer portion, whichever happens first. Each candidate will be given one minute to answer each posed question. Questions will be randomly drawn. Written questions that attack a person or are deemed inappropriate by the moderator will be withdrawn.

Following the question-and-answer period, each candidate for a contested position will be given two minutes for a final summary statement.

When candidates for uncontested positions choose to do so, they will be allowed a three-minute presentation time and no question/answer time.

Vote by mail in the upcoming election

BELCHERTOWN – Governor Charlie Baker signed legislation extending the no excuse vote by mail until June 30, so the Belchertown Town Election on May 17 would qualify. The same system is in place as was in 2020.

A voter can request a ballot by mail by completing an application and returning it to our office. Applications may be found attached to the Drop box at Town Hall, on the Town Clerk's webpage or if they call the office at 413-323-0281. Staff would be happy to mail them an application.

Once the Clerk's office receive the ballots, they will begin mailing them out and voters can use the drop box at Town Hall to drop off their voted ballots as well. The "Track my ballot" on the Secretary of State webpage will also be available so voters can track the progress of their ballot through the system the same way they could for the 2020 elections.

NOTICE

ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.

College NOTES

Local students named to Western New England University's Fall 2020 President's List

SPRINGFIELD – More than 500 students have been named to the Fall 2020 President's List at Western New England University. To qualify for the President's List, students must achieve a GPA of 3.80 or higher.

The following students have earned their place on Western New England University's distinguished President's List:

Hamza Wahhas, of Amherst, working toward a BS in Computer Science.

Kelly Braese, of Belchertown, working toward a BSBA in Accounting.

Ryan Chrabaszcz, of Belchertown, working toward a BSE in Mechanical Engineering.

Autumn Kelley, of Belchertown, working toward a Pre-Pharmacy.

Allison Lukas, of Belchertown, working toward a BSE in Biomedical Engineering.

Ashley McNamara, of Belchertown, working toward a Pre-Pharmacy.

Noah Pare, of Belchertown, working toward a BSE in Biomedical Engineering.

Matthew Buxton, of Granby, working toward a BSE in Mechanical Engineering.

Aubree Carr, of Granby, working toward a BA in Creative Writing.

Pierre Carriere, of Granby, working toward a BSE in Civil Engineering.

Jonathan Couture, of Granby, working toward a BSE in Civil Engineering.

Julia Frappier, of Granby, working toward a degree in Business.

Danielle Hamel, of Granby, working toward a BS in Secondary Ed/Biology.

Sarah Scott, of Granby, working toward a BS in Health Sciences.

Having just celebrated its Centennial, Western New England University is a private, independent, coeducational institution.

Aman Sharma awarded Phi Kappa Phi Graduate Research Grant

BATON ROUGE, LA – Aman Sharma, of Amherst, has been selected as a 2021 recipient of a Graduate Research Grant by the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi—the nation's oldest and most selective collegiate honor society for all academic disciplines. The grants of up to \$1,500 are designed to support graduate students who are active Society members seeking funding for research in support of career development opportunities. Sharma is one of 20 recipients nationwide to receive the award.

Sharma, a Ph.D. candidate at University of Massachusetts Amherst, will use funds from the award to develop new assays in his research experiments related to DNA damage.

Established in 2018, the grants are part of the Society's robust awards program, which gives \$1 million each year to outstanding students and members through study abroad grants, graduate fellowships, funding for post-baccalaureate development, member and chapter awards, and grants for local, national and international literacy initiatives.

To learn more about the Phi Kappa Phi Graduate Research Grant and this year's recipients, please visit www.phikappaphi.org/graduate-research.

SEE MORE COLLEGE NOTES, PAGE 10

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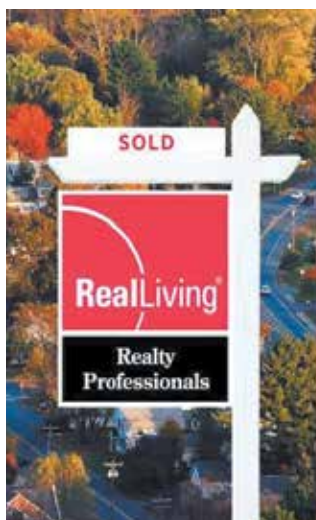


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OPINION

GUEST COLUMN

Enjoy Earth Day while rethinking your gardening practices

Die-hard gardeners celebrate Earth Day year round, I feel. We take pleasure in our yards and the bounty our gardens produce. But when the formal holiday of April 22nd approaches, I pause, analyze my own practices and make sure they are still in tune with my beliefs. While not a purist, I generally try to tread lightly on Mother Earth. I encourage you to take inventory this week as well, and if so inspired, adopt some of the following ideals borrowed from previous columns and add them to your own routines.

Feed the soil, not the plant. Have your soil tested and ask for organic recommendations to correct nutrient deficiencies. Replenishing your garden with amendments like rock phosphate and greensand will help to create long-lasting nutrient storehouses. Healthy soil will produce plants that are less prone to insect and disease problems.

Start a compost pile. Layer your vegetable and yard waste, keep it moist and give it a turn; after a few days turn it again. After a short time it will decompose, leaving behind a great source of organic matter. No matter how you garden, be it vegetables, flowers, herbs, fruits or even shrubs, each benefit from a yearly top dressing of “black gold.”

Make compost tea. Are your transplants looking a little pale? Rather than sprinkling them with “blue water,” perk them up with home-brewed compost tea. Mix one part well-rotted compost or manure to five parts water and allow it to sit for a week or more. Strain before foliar feeding your plants. Or, take a cup of the manure, pop it in a square of muslin and let it steep in a five gallon bucket. Fill your watering can no straining necessary.

Shop Mom and Pop. Develop a relationship with the garden center you buy your plants and gardening supplies from. Ask them to carry organic seeds, potting soils and pest control options. A friend of mine pestered one local company so much that they now carry everything I mentioned above as well as organic livestock feed.

Reduce, reuse, recycle! I first became familiar with this catch phrase back in 1990, when Earth Day celebrations went global. In the context of plastic pots and other containers used to grow or move plants, I’d like to think that the local Mom and Pop shop would take back the pots you bought their plants in and use them to grow next years crop. If not, maybe you could reuse them to start some homegrown seedlings and recycle the rest. I sure do, and when they get old and tattered I double them up! An even better solution for earth-conscious growers would be to replace plastic with fiber (stronger than peat and made from recycled materials to boot).

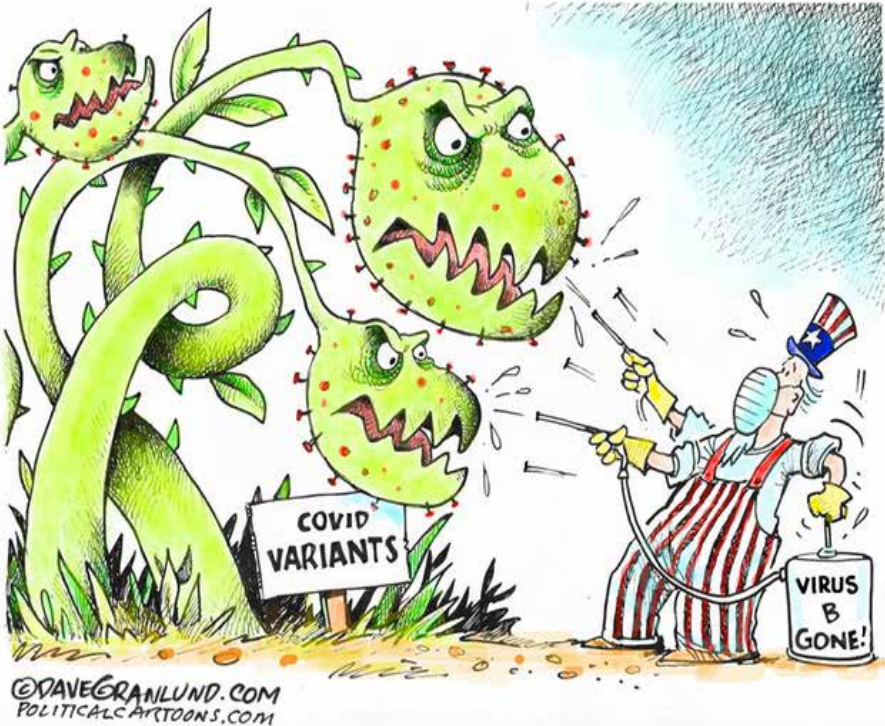
Use the least toxic measures to control bugs and other garden thugs. Beer to trap slugs, and baking soda for black spot, the list of remedies to fight garden maladies is numerous and not always a stretch of the imagination. If you choose a chemical option, follow the manufacturer’s recommendations. Assuming that more is better is outdated and dangerous thinking! We especially worry about our pollinator populations these days.

Conserve water. We all know that watering during the heat of the day results in lots of moisture lost to evaporation while watering in the evening can make plants more prone to disease. What to do? For happy, hydrated plants water in the early morning hours instead. Hand watering at the base of each plant or using soaker hoses or drip irrigation is far better than overhead sprinklers when it comes to conservation and disease prevention.

Extend the harvest. Do you know how far most fruits and vegetables have to travel to reach the local supermarket? Probably far more than the average American travels in a year’s time. Frustrated? Then read up on various methods of extending the use of your own garden bounty past the growing season. This could mean growing a few veggies like winter squash, onions or garlic, all of which store well. It could also mean trying your hand at freezing or drying some of your produce for use in the offseason. I just thawed out some roasted peppers for dinner tonight. It is a good feeling. Few of us can feed ourselves entirely, but whatever we can grow offsets the rest.

Enjoy Earth Day while rethinking your gardening practices.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 28 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturalist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to ekennedy@turley.com with “Gardening Question” in the subject line.



LETTERS

About the daffodils

To the Editor,

We hope that everyone has been enjoying the daffodils that have been planted on town property. The poem, “I Wander Lonely as a Cloud” by William Wordsworth is a beautiful tribute to this early harbinger of better weather and days to come. These daffodils have been made possible by a donation from a friend of Belchertown 4-H that we shall name Antheia after the Greek Goddess of

Flowers. Antheia had hoped to share the spring with her sister watching the daffodils “fluttering and dancing in the breeze,” but it wasn’t meant to be. When you see a daffodil, please honor the beauty and memory of Sylvia. Honor all those whom we have lost over the last year. I am sure that they are wandering as a cloud looking down on these beautiful daffodils.

Little things matter. Share the love.

Belchertown 4-H

In support of Dr. Amy LaMothe

Fellow citizens of Belchertown,

I’m writing to urge you to vote for Dr. Amy LaMothe for School Committee. I have known Amy for several years and have witnessed her dedication to the children of our community.

She believes that all children deserve a welcoming and supportive school experience and wants to bring her passion and motivation to the School Committee. Her

goal is to help students to discover their own passion while fostering an environment of compassion, respect, and kindness for everyone.

I believe that she is the voice needed to help keep our educational system thriving, which impacts our entire town and community. Please join me in voting for Amy LaMothe.

Sincerely,

Danielle Lord

Re-elect Ruby Bansal for School Committee

Dear community members:

These past few years have required more from our school committee members than ever before and Ruby Bansal has risen to the challenge. During her term in office, she has proven to be thoughtful, inquisitive, collaborative and inclusive - critical skills to effectively advocate for our students and strengthen our district. Ruby is not afraid to ask critical questions or consider new ideas. She understands the time commitment required in order to be well-informed on critical issues facing our schools, such as health and safety, equity and inclusion,

funding and technology. In addition, having served on the district strategic planning committee, Ruby is well positioned to provide the continuity needed to move that strategic plan forward and advance the priorities of our district during her next term.

It is clear to all who know her that Ruby cares deeply about our schools, our community and the success of all students. Your vote will enable her to continue making a positive difference. Please join me in re-electing Ruby Bansal for Belchertown School Committee on Monday, May 17.

Heather St. Germaine

Support Nick Pucel

Dear Sentinel Community Section,

I am writing in support of Nick Pucel’s candidacy for Selectboard. In my opinion Nick has a vision for the town that includes realistic growth while respecting Belchertown’s semi-rural personality, natural beauty and small town feel and is realistic about the role the select board plays in town decision making and is clear on and respects the limited scope of its authority. We have spoken many times about his ideas for encouraging utilization of already commercialized currently unused/neglected spaces without the need for new development. His focus is on encouraging and welcoming interesting businesses that will support and celebrate local products, services and people and provide needed new

employment opportunities. He’s not looking to gentrify our town or turn it into a Route 9 strip mall big box store row. Nick also works to help those who may be in a time of need in Belchertown and cares about litter free streets and I’m sure he will continue that independent of any possible future Selectboard position. I have only lived in town for 10 years and do not know all the local issues and history but I believe Nick’s plans are an encouraging direction we should consider. Nick is a hard working family man. Look him up on social media, participate in his virtual meetings until they can be in person or contact him directly and you can learn first hand the type of person he is and what he proposes.

Robert Merryman

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Belchertown, Granby & Amherst
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SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS

When can I get benefits from my ex-spouse?

RUSSELL GLOOR
Guest columnist

Dear Rusty: I know that I am able to get Social Security from my ex-husband. We were married for 16 years and I have not remarried. I will be 60 soon and he is 63. I do not know if he is retired yet, as we do not speak. Please advise when I can collect and how to go about the process.
Signed: Divorced Lady

Dear Divorced Lady: Since you were married to your ex for more than 10 years and haven’t remarried, you may be able to collect a spousal benefit from your ex-husband when you are 62-years-old. Your eligibility will depend upon the amount of your own personal Social Security benefit compared to your ex’s benefit amount, but you cannot collect an ex-spouse benefit before age 62. To be eligible for a benefit from your ex-spouse, you must also claim your personal Social Security from your own lifetime work record, and when you claim your own benefit, an ex-spouse benefit will be given, if you are entitled to one.

To be eligible for a benefit from your ex-spouse, your personal Social Security retirement benefit at your own full retirement age (FRA) must be less than 50% of the benefit your ex-husband would get at his FRA (note that FRA amounts are used for this determination, regardless of the age at which either of you claim Social Security). If your FRA benefit amount is less than half of his FRA benefit amount, then you will be entitled to a “spousal boost” to bring your total payment up to your spousal entitlement. But taken at age 62, both of those amounts will be reduced.

Your full retirement age is 67, and if you claim any Social Security benefit before that it will be reduced. At 62, your personal Social Security retirement benefit will be cut by 30% and your spousal boost will also be reduced. So, at age 62, the total amount of benefit you could get (your own benefit plus your

spousal boost) would be about 32.5% of your ex-husband’s FRA benefit amount. Nonetheless, if you are comfortable with these benefit reductions, you can claim at age 62, or any age thereafter, by contacting Social Security or, when the time comes, apply online at www.ssa.gov/applyforbenefits. You will need to provide Social Security with a copy of your marriage certificate and your final divorce decree, and you will need to know your ex-husband’s Social Security number. If you do not know his Social Security number, you’ll need to provide his parents’ names and his date and place of birth.

If you wish to find out in advance whether you’re entitled to an ex-spouse benefit and how much it is estimated to be, you can contact Social Security at 1.800-772-1213, or call your local Social Security office. You can find the local office number at www.ssa.gov/locator. Please note that all Social Security offices are temporarily closed to public access due to the pandemic, so calling them is your best current option to get an estimate of your spousal benefit.

One final caution: if you claim Social Security before your full retirement age and you are working, you’ll be subject to Social Security’s “earnings test” which limits how much you can earn before they take back some of your benefits.

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation’s staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website (amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadviser@amacfoundation.org.

Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

HISTORY MATTERS

April 16 to April 30

History Matters is a biweekly feature courtesy of The Grateful American Book Prize, which is given to children’s books that emphasize the importance of American history.

JOHN GRIMALDI AND DAVID BRUCE SMITH
Guest columnists

Less than two months after the siege of the Alamo, the Texas War for Independence took a turn towards triumph; on April 21, 1836, Sam Houston overwhelmed the army of Mexican General Santa Anna in the Battle of San Jacinto Houston, and his volunteers flogged the Mexican army and imprisoned their leader.

Houston agreed to release Santa Anna, a former Mexican president 11 times, only if he endorsed a treaty that acknowledged their independence and ended Mexico’s aggressive machinations.

In the meantime, the Republic of Texas was formed in 1836, and Houston was elected president--twice.

On Dec. 29, 1845, Texas became America’s 28th state, but maneuvers with Mexico persisted another two years; according to History.com, it “helped to fulfill America’s ‘manifest destiny’ to expand its territory across the entire North American continent.”

For more information about Sam Houston, the Grateful American Book Prize recommends “The Mexican American War” by John DiConsiglio.

Earth Day

In 1847, Vermont Congressman George Perkins Marsh gave a speech that positioned the nation into thinking about the necessity “to conserve America’s natural resources,” according to the Library of Congress.

Seventeen years later, President Lincoln signed the Yosemite Valley Grant Act; it declared that California’s Valley and Mariposa Big Tree Grove “shall be held for public use, resort and recreation.” Eight

years later, President Ulysses S. Grant signed the Yellowstone National Park Protection Act into law and set up the first national park in the world.

Throughout the industrial revolution, in the end days of the 19th century and most of the 20th, the environmentalists’ lobby to restore water and air pollution to reasonable ratios, has lagged in most cases.

Then, in 1969, Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson inaugurated a crusade to enlighten America about why the earth’s resources needed to be saved.

The first “Earth Day” was celebrated April 22, 1970. According to the website, the event “inspired 20 million Americans, at the time, 10% of the total population of the United States, to take to the streets, parks and auditoriums to demonstrate against the impacts of 150 years of industrial development, which had left a growing legacy of serious human impacts.”

The Grateful American Book Prize recommends “World Without Fish” by Mark Kurlansky.

George Washington

On April 30, 1789, George Washington was “humbled” when he was elected America’s first president, according to the Library of Congress. Washington “delivered the speech in a deep, low voice that betrayed what one observer called ‘manifest embarrassment.’”

He conveyed his Federal Hall remarks in the nation’s New York City capital. They were somewhat brief and fixated on the passage of the Bill of Rights. He had no obligation to deliver a message, other than to take his oath of office, but with that gesture, he set a precedent to address the nation, a tradition observed by every president since. Washington was the Chief Executive two consecutive, four-year terms.

The Grateful American Book Prize recommends “George Washington and the Founding of a Nation,” by Albert Marrin.

SULLIVAN • from page 1

“I don’t think they necessarily understood the questions I would have asked. So we kept it was the level of ‘explain to us the thing you like about Dr. Bienia,” said Bartosz. “She’s been in the district for a while so I would have liked to see her reach out to some alumni to be able to have some older kids have those conversations.”

She said at Granby High School, where Sullivan currently works, the students were in grades seven and up.

“I was surprised at how strongly they wanted to have a relationship with their superintendent,” said Bartosz. “They like the relationship they have with Sullivan now, so I thought that spoke volumes.”

Bartosz said some of the impressions she had from Sullivan’s site visit were that he is a strong communicator and he has a willingness to help people.

Parent said one takeaway she had in Sullivan’s visit was within the community. “The relationship building he’s been

able to do in the last four years has been astounding, not only we have (the police chief, finance committee members and Selectboard members). People were really focused on bridging that gap, it was apparent they could see him being able to do that,” Parent said.

Mallette said Dr. Bienia “made a point to visit each classroom, spend time and get to know the students. She definitely took the time to know who they were and their families.”

While discussing public interaction, committee members noted how many people responded back to a survey available to the community members.

Committee member Jill Pelletier said she felt some of things that were repeated.

“Some of those included this might not be the right time or the right place for her to be the candidate here,” she said. “There were definitely a lot of positives.”

Mallette said she believed the committee was looking at the culture of Granby would require the superintendent to work within

both schools.

“It’s running two schools. It’s having the collaboration between the two schools. One of the concerns is that (Bienia) has only been at one school has only had to deal with just one school...so that’s what her main focus is,” Mallette said. “Is that going to be a struggle to come her and be able to work within the elementary and the high school?”

Parent said Sullivan would face a similar challenge.

“Sullivan only focusses on grade seven to 12 in his current position versus pre-k to sixth, so I think regardless that’s the same,” Parent said.

School committee member Audrey

Siudak said she found Sullivan stood out to her when he answered a question about preparing the budget and working with local officials.

“I really liked what he said about having that shared vision...that our officials would know it and have it. It’s that collaborative piece, that is necessary, so when it came time to have those big discussion we would be on the same page because we would have those shared goals,” she said. “We can’t deny he’s already started those relationships so that’s one less hurdle we would go through.”

After 45-minute discussion, Parent nominated Sullivan for the position, which was unanimously approved.

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Due to COVID-19 protocol the 2020 Belchertown Water District Consumer Confidence Report is available by mail by calling (413) 323-6987.

It is available online on the District website www.belchertownwaterdistrict.org under “Reports” Direct URL: <https://www.belchertownwaterdistrict.org/Forms/ccrreport2020.bwd.pdf>

As the virus passes the report will be available at our main office located at 206 Jabish Street or at the Belchertown Selectman’s office as well as the Belchertown Public Library.

Plan with a Purpose Scholarship applications are now available

BELCHERTOWN – This Spring marks the fourth consecutive year of Pioneer Valley Financial Group’s “Plan with a Purpose” Tri-Town Scholarship. The scholarship looks to honor local graduating seniors who are meaningfully planning a purposeful future by leveraging their academic career and making a difference in their community.

Three applicants, from Ludlow, Belchertown, and Wilbraham, will each be awarded the \$1000 scholarship. To be eligible, the student must be a graduating senior in one of the three towns. The application will consider service to the community, extracurricular participation and leadership, and academic standing (GPA 3.5 and above) as well as financial need.

Cover letters are encouraged. Though the Wilbraham deadline has passed, Belchertown is still accepting applications! The deadline for Belchertown is May 1. Please reach out to your guidance office if you are interested in applying. If you would like to learn more about PV Financial Group or wish to speak with an experienced advisor to help develop and cultivate your financial goals, please visit www.pvfinancial.com, or call 413-589-1500. Securities and advisory services offered through Commonwealth Financial Network®, Member FINRA/SIPC, a Registered Investment Adviser. PV Financial Group is located at 535 East Street, Ludlow, MA 01056.

UPDATE • from page 1

is a high risk sport for COVID-19. I’m open to putting up rules about masks,” he said. “We can put up signage and monitor it...if people aren’t wearing masks if it happens numerous times, we can make a report.” The board unanimously agreed to open the courts back up, encouraging users to adhere to COVID-19 protocol.

Chestnut Hill pool Thibeault also informed the board that as of Monday, April 12, the pool was open again following repairs to the pool deck and the replacement of a heat exchanger. He said not only were students from the swim team able to resume use of the pool, but lap swims were also resumed. “Protocols are being followed in terms of what was laid

out by the school department and by us. Last meeting, (Town Administrator Gary Brougham) mentioned the heat exchanger got replaced and the pump,” he said. “The pool right now is a little colder than it has been because recirculate all of the water takes a little bit of time. Over the next few days, it should get up to the full heating temperature that we would like it at.” He said the pool was also

repainted and many of the upkeep, usually done during the shut down period in the summer, were able to be done in the past few weeks. “We now are able to keep the pool open through the summer rather than shut down for two weeks,” Thibeault said. “Everything looking good got replaced, going as smoothly as possible. It went fairly well.”

PARK ST. • from page 1

wells to rest properly. They need time to rest and refill with water.” Due to this dilemma, the water district may need to enforce a water ban on the existing distribution system for the remainder of this calendar year to limit water usage within the system until the new elevated storage tank is constructed, painted, disinfected and placed in service in the spring of 2022. Once the tank is disconnected from the system and demolished, and the water ban could begin. This is expected in late May. The water district will be updating the residents within the distribution system. After the demolition, residents will be updated routinely on the progress of the project and the construction of the new elevated storage tank which is expected to begin at the end of this summer, according to Williams. Once the tank is constructed, painting of the interior and

exterior elements of the tank will be completed. When the tank is painted, the tank will be disinfected and samples will be taken. Once the tank samples pass, the tank can be filled and placed in service. This is expected late in the spring of 2022. The project will be complete by June 30, 2022. JL Construction Corp. of Springfield was awarded the project, which is estimated to cost \$2.6 million. The cost of the project is being funded through a Municipal Vulnerabilities Preparedness Program grant as contributions from the town, water department and volunteers. In 2020, the Belchertown Planning Board approved site plans detailing plans to replace the aged, 100,000 gallon water tank with a new 250,000 gallon tank and tower. Although the tower would remain in its current general location in the back parking lot area of the Old Town Hall Building, safety concerns in particular have

prompted engineers to consider having the tower moved 10 feet to the south. Using water resilience grant funds made available by the MVP program, the town, in partnership with the Belchertown Water District, began the process of examining projects related to water resiliency and storm water management amidst growing concerns over climate change impact on municipal infrastructure. The water tank was quickly identified as a priority need for replacement with Fuss & O’Neil Associate and Water Resources Engineer Diane Mas told the board in Jan. 2020 that concerns over more severe storms and the need for adequate long-term water storage prompted the commission to begin looking at replacing the tank. She noted the 2016 drought as a primary example of the need for a reliable water source in communities. The tank is primarily utilized both for peak demand periods as well as for use by firefighters

should the need arise. “We’re at the point in the design where we have a good sense of where the tank is going to go, the size it’s going to be, what it’s going to look like. We’re at a point where an easement would be required from the town for it to sit on town property about 60 feet to the south, south-west of the current tank,” said Mas. The easement in question, according to Mas, would be roughly 9,500 square feet. Both Flood and Mas said that moving the tank’s location and factoring a slight height adjustment would not only aid in superior water flow between Park St. and a second tank on Allen St. but would also serve as a preventative measure. Currently falling ice from the tower could jeopardize the nearby Old Town Hall building and moving the tower would help to mitigate the threat while allowing greater ease of access to the fair shed which sits adjacent beneath the tower at present.

COMMITTEE • from page 1

be up to the staff,” she said. “The initial project is mapping out the content and reorganizing for a better user experience is the first step.” Selectboard member Jim Barry asked about the future of the committee following the completion of the website update. “This is the first iteration of this committee, then what will happen subsequently after this project is completed is that it will be open to recommendations of what will happen next from the committee,” Turner said. Selectboard Chair Gail Gramarossa followed up, asking if the committee would present its results to the board. Turner said the committee would do so. Last summer, the website was relaunched by IT Director Kevin Hannon. On the back end there are some changes that should make it easier to town staff to keep information current,” Hannon said. The website is “now much more mobile device friendly. It is also re-organized to be more user friendly,” Hannon said. There is a new central location for agendas and minutes, a site-specific search feature, an e-notification feature as well as others. There is now a calendar that will alert people to read closings, upcoming meetings and events being run by the town or any of its boards or committees, Hannon said. There is an alert system that should it be needed the town can post urgent information that will “pop up” on the main page. Future additions include online forms to “allow people to request information or possibly report information at their convenience, implementing an e-permitting solution that will tie into the website and afford a much greater ability to process permits and inspections online and adding jobs posting and bid posting sections to the website,” said Hannon. There will be some integration with social media, though to what extent has yet to be determined.



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“Our house in a snow globe,” by Belchertown resident Erin Galster. This photo was taken with a Lensball.

WINTER PAYS A VISIT

BELCHERTOWN – Thanks a Nor’easter, the region received snow in various amounts last week. Residents in Belchertown and Granby shared photos of their snowdays.



Kathryn Toll-Chandler sent in a photo of snow-topped tulips in Belchertown last week.

AT LEFT: Brody O’Connell, 6, of Belchertown. The measuring stick is his stick he made in his kindergarten art class this year.



Patricia Bonnett sent a photo of spring and winter merging after the snowstorm last week.



Lesa Lessard Pearson sent a photo of a chickadee at the birdfeeder during the snowstorm.



Nancy Kwiatkowski, in Belchertown, sent before and after photos of her home following the snowstorm.



Belchertown resident, Marisa Gray’s dogs, Ivy and Odin, were outside to enjoy the snow last week’s snowstorm.



Cheryl Dutton sent in photos from her yard with a simple caption – “ugh.”

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College NOTES

Autumn Kelley welcomed into Alpha Lambda Delta National Honor Society

SPRINGFIELD – Autumn Kelley, of Belchertown, was among over 80 students from the Western New England University College of Arts & Sciences inducted into Alpha Lambda Delta in a virtual ceremony held on March 5. Kelley is working toward a Pre-Pharmacy degree.

Alpha Lambda Delta recognizes the best and brightest members of the nation's first-year college students. The mission of the Society is to encourage superior academic achievement, to promote intelligent living and a high standard of learning, and to assist students in recognizing and developing meaningful goals in society. Students in Alpha Lambda Delta must have a grade point average of at least 3.5 after their first semester of full-time enrollment.

SEE MORE COLLEGE NOTES, PAGE 5

Belchertown seniors featured in Q and A



Carlie Howe

BELCHERTOWN – Belchertown High School Principal Christine Vigneux has begun featuring a member of the Class of 2021 in a question and answer survey about their tenure in the school.

Each of the seniors featured decorated a cap sharing their future plans and they have also answered questions about their experiences at “the Nest,” the school community of Belchertown Public Schools.



These seniors will be featured in the Sentinel as well.

Carlie Howe

What are your future plans?

I plan on going to Cosmetology school to get my cosmetology license.

What is your favorite memory from the Nest?

My favorite memory was all the spirit assemblies.

What advice do you have for our younger Orioles?

My advice for younger Orioles is to not overwork themselves and to ask teachers for help and more time when needed.

What is your proudest moment as an Oriole?

My proudest moment is being able to pass my classes during online school.

Carlie Howe plans on going to cosmetology school after graduating from Belchertown High School.



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Orioles fall to Tigers



Timothy Mitus attempts to make a tackle.



Jaden Wise takes the ball to the right side.



Owen Sedlacek tries to avoid a tackle before handing the ball off.



PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM
Samuel Winston tries to make a tackle for the Orioles.

South Hadley scores with 37 points

TIM PETERSON
Sports Correspondent

SOUTH HADLEY—The battle of Route 202 between Belchertown and South Hadley football was moved from last Friday night to last Thursday afternoon due to the possibility of Belchertown being added to the state’s COVID-19 high-risk “red” zone. To do that, both teams had to play through the elements.

Playing in a steady rain on a chilly afternoon, the Tigers offense scored five rushing touchdowns and the defense nearly posted a shutout in defeating the Orioles, 37-8, before a few hearty souls, which included the South Hadley cheerleaders, at Memorial Field in South Hadley.

“We had to play the game today because of COVID reasons,” said South Hadley head coach Scott Taylor. “We already had a game canceled last week and we couldn’t afford to lose another. We played much better during the second half than we did in the first.”

South Hadley’s previous game with Chicopee High School was cancelled due to COVID-19 related issues.

The Tigers, who beat the Orioles in another one-sided affair on their turf field during the 2019 regular season, improved their Fall II record to a perfect 4-0. They’ve outscored their first four opponents of the season, 58-14.

It was a disappointing afternoon for Belchertown (1-3), who posted a 22-0 win versus Ludlow in week two. The Orioles have been outscored, 108-24, in their three losses.

The miserable weather didn’t seem to bother the South Hadley players very much.

“Nothing compares to playing a football game on a nice Friday night,” said South Hadley senior running back James Couture, who didn’t play in the fourth quarter. “Once we warmed up, it felt great to be out here on our turf field. It’s another good win for us.”

Couture led the Tigers offensive attack with a total of 147 rushing yards on eight carries. He also scored three rushing touchdowns and recovered a fumble on defense.

See **ORIOLES**, page 12 •

MIAA activity picking up

GREGORY A. SCIBELLI
gscibelli@turley.com

REGION – It has been a rarity for a team from Western Massachusetts to qualify for the Division 1A tournament, a special tournament for select elite teams in various sports.

A lot of questions have been raised about the future of the Division 1A tournament now that the state is going to a statewide tournament and eliminating the sectional tournaments.

Last Thursday, the Tournament Management Committee met to discuss the subject.

The Division 1A tournament will likely be delayed until 2025 in order to allow the MIAA and its various sport committee to compile four years of data under the new structure.

Division 1A tournaments are dependent on the sport, and not all sports hold one. Hockey, basketball, soccer, and baseball and softball are among the sports that could possibly hold tournaments. The 1A tournament has been held for hockey in previous years with Pope Francis, previously Cathedral, taking part in the tournament often.

Baseball has also been a sport that has had a 1A tournament in recent years, with many of the state’s elite teams qualifying to play in it. The teams that qualify often would abandon their section tournaments to participate in the 1A event.

According to the proposal made to the TMC, any approved 1A tournament must have a format that includes selection and seedings using the same power-rating/ranking system that is used for the other tournaments.

Recently, as part of the move to go to a statewide tournament, Maxpreps was secured to organize tournaments and collect information for rankings for state tournaments. Maxpreps is expected to use a formula to compile power rankings in order to see tournaments. It is not known exactly what the formula will be, but it could be a modified version of the Walker system, a ranking system utilized by teams from Western Massachusetts for tournaments. The sys-

See **MIAA**, page 13 •

Williams looking for another title run

SEEKONK – Two years ago, Ronnie Williams became the second driver not named Matt Hirschman to win a Tri Track Open Modified Series presented by All Phases Renovations championship. In 2021, he looks to do it again.

Williams, driving for veteran car owner Gary Casella, returns to Tri Track driving the familiar No. 25 he’s taken to Victory Lane before, and hopes to be consistent enough to contend for the title at the end of the six-race schedule.

“Gary can be a clown when you’re around him, it’s fun,” Williams said. “If you look at Gary, you might not think he can set up a race car... but every single place we go, we are fast. He wants to win, I want to win.... and we just work well together.”

Williams is set for another busy year as

a driver, competing full-time chasing his third SK Modified championship at Stafford Motor Speedway, while also running with the Tri Track Series and some select NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour and Open Modified events. Over the last three years, Williams has become one of the quickest and most successful rising stars the Modified ranks in New England offers.

“It’s fun,” Williams said of all of his driving ventures. “It’s better when we are winning... last year we didn’t have as much success as we would have liked, but hopefully this year we can turn it back around and have some more fun.”

Tri Track will visit three New England race tracks in 2021 -- Monadnock Speedway, Star Speedway and Seekonk Speedway. Williams has previous wins at Monadnock

and Seekonk, but has yet to hold the checkered flag at Star.

“I don’t have a ton of laps at Star but I love it,” Williams said. “It’s a weird little track. We almost had a win there in the SBM when Ron Silk beat us, which was a great race. It’s one track that both Gary & I really want to win at this year. Hopefully we can get it done.”

Williams knows the competition is going to be stout, and the path to wins, or the championship, will not be easy with Tri Track.

“You have a guy like Matt Hirschman racing and a lot of people from a lot of different parts of New England coming to run with Tri Track,” Williams said. “It provides some of the best racing and brings the best drivers.”

The Tri Track Open Modified Series presented by All Phases Renovations season



Ronnie Williams is among the drivers looking to make his way back to a championship this season.

begins on Saturday, May 1 at Monadnock Speedway. For more information on the Tri Track Open Modified Series, visit TriTrackModifieds.com and follow the series on social media.

SPORTS

Premier Lacrosse League coming to Gillette

FOXBOROUGH – The Premier Lacrosse League (PLL) powered by Ticketmaster announced today that the league will return to Gillette Stadium to kick off the 2021 season with an opening five-game slate June 4 through June 6.

“There’s no better location to kick off our 2021 tour than Gillette Stadium,” said PLL Co-Founder and CMO Paul Rabil. “Our inaugural weekend in 2019 was a huge success. The fans in New England are passionate, and the Patriots organization is exceptional.”

The PLL season will begin at Gillette Stadium for the second time, getting underway with a primetime matchup between Cannons LC and Redwoods LC under the lights on Friday, June 4. Saturday’s slate includes a championship rematch between Whipsnakes LC and Chaos LC, followed by Archers LC taking on Atlas LC. On Sunday afternoon, Cannons LC will return to the field against Waterdogs LC, and the weekend will be capped off with a matchup between Chrome LC and Redwoods LC.

The PLL is a tour-based model featuring eight teams and the world’s best lacrosse players. In addition to being full-time employees and receiving health benefits, players get equity stakes in the league – a first in professional sports. The league recently announced a merger with Major League Lacrosse, leading to the addition of the PLL’s eighth lacrosse club, Cannons LC.

The 2021 PLL season will include 11 tour stops from June to September. For the

third consecutive year, PLL games will be distributed via an exclusive media rights agreement with NBC Sports Group with action being shown through a combination of NBC, NBCSN, and Peacock TV.

The PLL played its inaugural weekend at Gillette Stadium in 2019, and had announced plans to open the 2020 season at the home of the six-time Super Bowl Champion New England Patriots and New England Revolution before COVID-19 forced the adjustment of the season to a three-week quarantined and fanless tournament. Gillette Stadium has also hosted five NCAA Men’s Lacrosse Championships since 2008 and holds the NCAA Men’s Division I Championship attendance record (2008: 48,970), the top three attendance records for Division I National Championship Games since 2012 (2012: 30,816, 2018: 29,455 and 2017: 28,971) and the top three Division II and Division III National Championship attendance records (2017: 31,560, 2008: 24,317 and 2009: 24,072). The venue hosted professional lacrosse games in 2015, and was recently awarded the 2025 and 2026 NCAA Men’s and Division I Women’s Lacrosse Championships.

Kraft Group President-International Dan Kraft, who was a collegiate lacrosse goalie for Tufts University in the 1980s and served on the executive Board of the 2018 Federation of International Lacrosse’s World Championships Host Committee, expressed his continued support for the league and its ongoing potential to further

grow the sport in the New England region and throughout the country.

“We are thrilled to continue our incredible partnership with Paul and Mike Rabil and the Premier Lacrosse League and once again host the league’s opening weekend at Gillette Stadium this summer,” Kraft said. “We sincerely missed hosting professional lacrosse in 2020 and cannot wait to welcome the world’s best lacrosse players back to Foxborough in 2021 for an exciting opening weekend. We feel Gillette Stadium is the country’s preeminent lacrosse venues and look forward to hosting another world-class event promoting the sport in such a large and passionate lacrosse region.”

Under the Commonwealth of Massachusetts’ reopening plan, Gillette Stadium will safely welcome fans to each game, and tickets are available now for all five games at Ticketmaster.com.

The PLL will work with its venue partners to maintain compliance with local and state governance regarding health and safety best practices. This will include standardized weekend-to-weekend health and safety measures, including but not limited to: seating pods, social distancing, enhanced venue cleaning, mobile ticketing, hand sanitation stations, staff and attendee mask requirements. Similar to the 2020 season, the PLL will be working with a committee of medical professionals to develop health and safety protocols for all players, staff and fans. For more information about the PLL and the 2021 season, visit www.premierlacrosseleague.com.

Valley Wheel Baseball seeks new players

REGION – The Valley Wheel Over-30 Baseball League is looking for new players for the 2021 season, which is set to begin at the end of April. Players who are 28-years-old prior to June 1 are eligible to play in the league this season, however, only those 30 by June 1 are eligible to pitch. The league includes six teams and there is a 15-game season that begins on Sunday, April 25. Games are 12 Sundays, a special Mother’s Day weekend Saturday game, and two weekday night games under the lights. The season ends the final week of July with the playoffs for the top four teams during the first two weeks of August. While tryouts have completed, there are still open roster spots among the six teams in the league. The league will continue to accept applications for new players throughout the season. All players bat and every player spends at least four innings in the field in a nine-inning game. The league will be playing with some minor modifications due to the COVID-19 pandemic to start. For more information, please contact League Commissioner Jim Nason at wheel12@comcast.net.



ORIOLES • from page 11

Couture gave a lot of credit to the Tigers linemen for helping him score the three touchdowns.

“My linemen did an outstanding job of blocking for me,” he said. “I ran into the endzone untouched on all three of my touchdowns.”

The members of the Tigers O-line are junior’s Ishmael Flores, Tyrone Irwin, Jake Jackson, Dylan Cousineau, and Tyler Mayer.

After both teams punted on their first offensive possessions of the game, the Orioles put-together an eight-play drive.

In the middle of the series, Orioles senior quarterback Owen Sedlacek gained 13 and 10 yards on back-to-back runs moving the ball into South Hadley territory for the first time. Four plays later, the Tigers recovered a fumble following a botched handoff.

On the final play of the first quarter, South Hadley senior QB Shawn Mitchell pitched the ball to sophomore running back Brock Fitzell, who sprinted 17 yards down the right sideline before being tackled.

Couture finished the drive by running 24 yards down the left sideline on the first play of the second quarter before diving into the end zone. He also scored a rushing touchdown on the two-point conversion play.

Then freshman Caleb Bradley recovered an onside kick at the Orioles 46-yard line.

The South Hadley offense was able to move the ball on the ground inside the five-yard line before Belchertown

senior Sam Winston recovered a fumble.

Following a couple of penalties, the Orioles drive stalled, and they were forced to punt.

With 1:33 remaining in the first half, the home team took a 14-0 lead on a 28-yard touchdown run by junior running back Collin Mailhot.

Couture added two more rushing touchdowns during the first five minutes of the third quarter which gave the Tigers a commanding 30-0 lead.

On a third down play, Couture found a hole in the line and dashed 43 yards into the end zone with 10:24 remaining in the third quarter. Bradley scored a rushing touchdown on the conversion play.

After Couture recovered a fumble at the Orioles 42-yard line, he scored his third rushing TD of the game on the second play of the series. Junior Matt Brousseau also ran the ball into the end zone on the conversion play.

Mitchell began the Tigers next offensive series late in the third quarter by completing two consecutive passes to senior wide receiver Austin Robinette for 26 and 15 yards.

“We had planned to throw the ball a lot in today’s game. Obviously, the weather didn’t allow for that and we ran the ball most of the time,” Taylor said. “Shawn did get a chance to throw a couple of passes in the second half and our receivers always work very hard.”

With 9:30 left in regulation, Bradley capped of the 12-play scoring drive with a 21-yard touchdown run.

Then junior Brady Mendoza added the extra point increasing the Tigers lead to 37-0.

Because South Hadley had more than a 30-point lead in the fourth quarter, the scoreboard clock didn’t stop running other than during timeouts.



Tyler Laramie returns the ball.

The Orioles finished the game with a six-play scoring drive, which was capped off with a 15-yard TD run by Winston. He also scored on the two-point conversion play as the final seconds ticked off the clock.

Belchertown is scheduled to wrap-up the Fall II football season against Easthampton back at Memorial Field on Saturday afternoon.

South Hadley is slated to host Central Mass. power Northbridge at 6pm on Friday night. Northbridge head coach Ken LaChapelle began his coaching career in 1976 and he’s the all-time winningest high school football coach in Massachusetts.

“We’ve never faced Northbridge before and we’re really looking forward to playing them. It’s going to be a huge challenge for us,” Taylor said. “I’m also looking forward to meeting coach LaChapelle.”

The last time that the Tigers defeated a Central Mass. opponent was an 18-0 shutout win versus Milford in the 2005 Division 1A Central-Western Mass. Super Bowl game.

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Celebration of Earth open UMass Theater’s Rights of Spring Festival

AMHERST – Successfully opening a festival that spans online and in-person events, not to mention different performance genres from installations to devised theater, needs to be marked with some sort of rite. Audience are invited to join UMass Theater in celebrating the start of our festival at I’nvocation + Earth!” on April 22, starting at 7:15 outside on the Haigis Mall. (Registration is available through the festival website.)

The evening will begin with an Invocation. The Rights of Spring Festival, according to producer Judyie Al-Bilali, is meant to offer theater-makers and audiences alike an opportunity to consider the myths and stories we tell in our culture and to re-examine and redefine our values after a hard year of upheaval.

Flowing into the Invocation will be Atlas, a piece that is part of Monuments of the Future, a series of interactive performances taking place around campus throughout the festival. (More details about the monuments series will be shared in a separate announcement and on our website.)

After the Invocation and Atlas, audience and performers alike are invited to join in a procession to the pond-side location where our Earth!, an over 20 foot-tall installation of a globe and related informational exhibits, will have its premiere at 7:45 p.m.

Over the past few years, Technical Director Michael Cottom has created a series of projects that demonstrate the benefits of merging of the STEM fields and Arts, aka STEAM. In this latest case, the project displays a blending of theater, sustainability, technical design, engi-

neering, and building skills. A version of “Earth!” was first conceived last year for the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, but plans to actually build it were scuttled by the pandemic. It was reconceived this year. Originally planned to have an interior display area, the design is now viewable solely from the outside, with informational posters that will be illuminated and projected up onto the Earth.

In keeping with the spirit of Earth Day, which happens the day before our festival, this “Earth!” is sustainably built — the metal frame of the construction will be recycled into a turntable for the stage, and the fabric stretched over the frame is a reused parachute.

After its premiere, the Earth! installation will remain up for viewing beside the campus pond through the end of the festival — no registration is required for viewing.

“Invocation + Earth!” are part of “The Rights of Spring,” a theater festival presented by the University of Massachusetts Department of Theater to rebuild connections with each other and celebrate what matters in life. As winter thaws out, there is no better time to safely gather and spark joy together. Events run from April 22 to May 2 and are free to the general public with performances in person and online.

“Invocation + Earth!” are free to attend. Visit the Fine Arts Center Box Office to claim your spot in the audience of “Invocation + Earth! and other Rights of Spring Festival” events. There is a procession between the two events. If you are unable to participate in the procession due to mobility issues, please contact UMass Theater.

MIAA • from page 11


tem was developed for use due to the vast diversity among the schools in the region.

The proposal also says any 1A tournament must be single elimination tournaments. There are currently no multi-elimination tournaments with the exception of consolation rounds for wrestlers. But that

is an individual, not a team tournament.

According to the proposal, data will be analyzed in the next four years in order to see if dominance exists in particular sports and if there is a need to establish the elite tournament across the state.

There was a 12-2 vote approving the proposal and recommending it to the MIAA Board of Directors.



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NEWS & FEATURES

As a paper of record, we attempt to cover all general news, personality profiles, and community features that we know about. This includes all selectmen and school committee meetings as well as spot planning board, board of health, finance, and other town meetings determined by the issue's relevance to our readers. There are the annual major community event features that we should always cover, but we are more than open to suggestions of other features to celebrate the fabric of our communities and their many interesting occupants. Our loyal advertisers provide funding for this paid staff coverage.

For more information on news or community features for The Sentinel, please email sentinel@turley.com.

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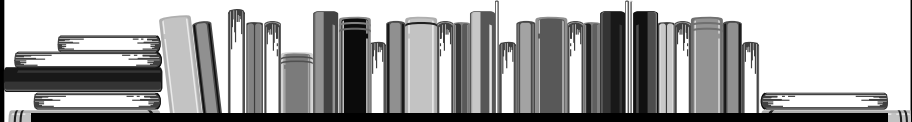
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OBITUARY

Ruby Louise Keller



GRANBY - Ruby Keller, 87 passed away on April 18, 2021 in Holyoke.

Ruby was born in Smithville, Tennessee on Jan. 7, 1934. She is survived by her brothers Gary and Larry Pedigo, her sister Teresa, son Douglas M. Keller, grandchildren Felicia Hubacz, Erick Keller, and Daniel Keller, great grandchildren Cody Keller, Ava Laine Keller, Brouche and Laydien Domingez. She was predeceased by her husband Donald E. Keller Sr. and her son Donald E. Keller Jr.

Ruby worked her way up to chief manager and retired from Mount Holyoke College Dining Services after almost 30 years of service.

She was a loving and devoted wife and mother who spent most of her time with family whether it was cooking, walking, biking or just sitting in the car port chatting. She had endless stories of her youth, stealing a car, hanging with her girlfriends, or assisting her dad with moonshining activities. She was so charismatic that many friends would call her mom or “mema” as her grandchildren called her. She was a strong, independent and feisty woman who wasn’t afraid to speak her mind. She enjoyed classic country music and especially loved Patsy Cline. She took pleasure with occasional trips to the casino and was quite the card shark when it came to a game of poker.

She will forever live on through those that knew and loved her and will be greatly missed.

Calling hours will be held Thursday, April 22, from 4 to 6 p.m. at Curran O’Brien Funeral Home, 33 Lamb St, South Hadley. COVID-19 rules will be strictly enforced.

The funeral will be held on Friday, April 23, at Massachusetts Veterans’ Memorial Cemetery in Agawam and will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in her name to the Granby Senior Center, 10 W State St, Granby, MA 01033.

The Sentinel OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$120, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph.

Death Notices & Paid Obituaries should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.



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CLUES ACROSS

1. Ocean surface indicator (abbr.)

4. American time

7. Satisfaction

8. Diving duck

10. Very small amount

12. Metrical units

13. An ignorant or foolish person

14. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)

16. It may sting you

17. Turn outward

19. Perform on stage

20. “CSI” actor

21. Localities

25. Make a choice

26. Indicates position

27. One of Thor’s names

29. Indian musical rhythmic pattern

30. “The Raven” author

31. Take in solid food

32. Legendary QB

39. Sorrels

41. Organization of nations

42. Texas pharmaceutical company

43. Mathematical term

44. Expression of disappointment

45. Abba __, Israeli politician

46. Hide away

48. Salad restaurant

49. Daughters of Boreas (mythology)

50. Men’s fashion accessory

51. Political action committee

52. Unhappy

CLUES DOWN

1. Make unhappy

2. Heard the confession of

3. Capital of Taiwan

4. Fiddler crab

5. Brazilian dances

6. Fit with device to assist breathing

8. Brother or sister

9. Pastries

11. “Lone Survivor” director Peter

14. Boat type (abbr.)

15. Apertures (biology)

18. Suffix

19. Creative endeavor

20. Icelandic poem

22. Spanish dances

23. Town in Central Italy

24. Cars need it

27. Mimics

28. Rocky peak

29. Cigarette (slang)

31. One point south of due east

32. Soap actress Braun

33. Large domesticated wild ox

34. Island nation

35. Appear

36. Addictive practices

37. Loss of control of one’s body

38. Type of poster

39. Greek mountain

40. Funny person

44. One and only

47. Pouch



5 reasons why summer camp is a good choice for kids

Summer vacation offers students a respite from lessons and the routine of school. Children might once have eagerly awaited those final days of classes so they could lounge poolside, skip rocks across ponds and spend the long days of the season playing with friends. But many of today's youngsters spend much of their summer vacations indoors playing with their digital devices.

Perhaps that's why one of the last vestiges of the classic summer vacation escape — summer camp — remains such a viable option for parents who want their children to get outdoors once the school year ends.

Although kids needn't be in camp all summer long, a week or two can benefit campers of all ages. The following are five reasons why summer camp might be the right fit this year.

1. Explore talents. Summer camps help young people explore their unique interests and talents. Under an organized, yet often easygoing, camp schedule, kids can dabble in sports, arts and crafts, leadership, community support,

and so many other activities that may not be fully available to them elsewhere.

2. Physical activity: Lots of camps build their itineraries around physical activities that takes place outdoors. Campers may spend their time swimming, running, hiking, playing sports, climbing, and so much more. This can be a welcome change for kids accustomed to living sedentary lifestyles. Regular physical activity has many health benefits and can set a foundation for healthy habits as an adult.

3. Gain confidence. Day and sleep-away camps offer campers the opportunity to get comfortable in their own skin. Camps can foster activities in self-esteem by removing the academic measures of success and fill in with noncompetitive opportunities to succeed. Campers learn independence, decision-making skills and the ability to thrive outside of the shadow of their parents, siblings or other students.

4. Try new things. Camp gives children the chance to try new things, whether that's learning to cook, explor-

ing new environments or embracing a new sport or leisure activity. Opening oneself up to new opportunities can build character and prove enlightening for children.

5. Make new friends. Camp is a great place to meet new people and

make lifelong friends. Campers flood in from areas near and far. This provides kids with a chance to expand their social circles beyond their immediate neighborhoods and schools.

Camps benefit children in a variety

of ways. Lessons learned in camp can strengthen values, build confidence, develop coping mechanisms when adversity strikes, and enable campers to make lifelong friends.



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DIG SAFE • from page 18

digging projects and uneven surfaces. Utility lines need to be properly marked because even when digging only a few inches or digging in a location that's previously been marked, the risk of striking an underground utility line still exists. A call to 811 is the best safeguard and the first line of defense to preventing strikes on underground utility lines.

A quick phone call to 811 several days before digging connects callers to their local one call center, which notifies the appropriate utility companies of their intent to dig. Professional locators then arrive at the digging site to mark the approximate locations of underground lines with flags, spray paint or both. The service is easy to use and free of charge.

State laws mandate that 811 must be contacted a few days in advance of beginning projects that require excavation. Failure to call 811 may be punishable by fines, which in some states can be as high as \$1,000 for a first offense and \$10,000 for subsequent offenses.

National Grid works closely with local fire and police departments and, with their strong support, people are calling before they dig. Calling 811 can potentially avoid an incident that requires police and fire response.

Congressman Neal solicits submissions for 2021 Congressional Art Competition

SPRINGFIELD - Congressman Richard E. Neal called on local high school artists today to submit their applications to the 2021 Congressional Art Competition.

"The Congressional Art Competition is a great opportunity for talented young artists from our local high schools," said Congressman Neal. "Each year we have stellar submissions from across the First Congressional District and one winner's artwork will be chosen to hang in the halls of the United States Capitol representing western and central Massachusetts. Even in the midst of the pandemic, we con-

tinue to hold this time-honored tradition. I am excited to see this year's applicants."

The competition is open to high school students from the First Congressional District of Massachusetts. The artwork must be two dimensional and not exceed 26" x 26" x 4". The art must be original in concept, design and execution and may not violate any U.S. copyright laws. Each student may submit up to three entries.

This year, students will be asked to submit photos instead of their actual artwork for judging due to the pandemic. Because of this, it is

very important that students use the entry form to explain their pieces as thoroughly as possible. The name, description, medium, and size measurements will assist the judges as they rate the entries. Photos of the art and entry release form must be submitted by April 28 to Jeanne Ahern at Jeanne.Ahern@mail.house.gov.

The rules and submission entry release forms can be found at <https://neal.house.gov/art-competition>.

For more information, students or teachers can contact Jeanne Ahern directly.

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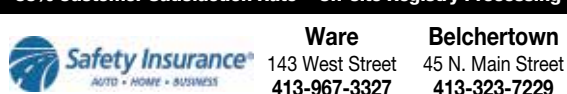
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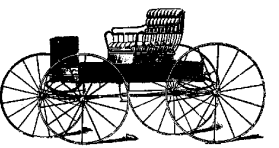
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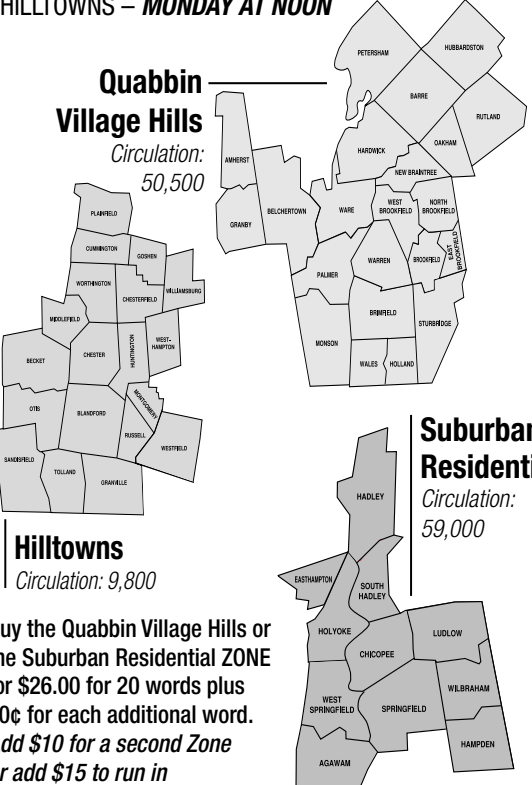
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